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India Cultures Quarterly

1960 QUARTER THREE

INDIA CULTURES QUARTERLY

VOL. 18 THIRD QUARTER 1960 No. 3

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THE INDIA CULTURES QUARTERLY

Editor : Dr. R. D. Immanuel

Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur, M. P., India

Vol 18 THIRD QUARTER 1960 NO. 3

NOTICE

Our procedure with respect to renewals may be explained for the mutual benefit of magazine and subscriber.

1. India Subscriptions

Subscriptions to addresses in India are automatically renewed unless the reader informs us in advance. The renewal is sent V.P.P., after first having sent the subscriber a printed notice to expect the same. Some subscribers, on receiving the expiration notice, send us their subscription fees by Money Order which is appreciated by us and saves V.P.P. charges. But the time factor sometimes creates confusion. The subscriber may send his subscription to us about the same time we are mailing out the current issue, so that the two cross in the mails. On the one hand, we receive the Money Order, and on the other hand, the subscriber receives the V.P.P. Some subscribers have thus paid twice, and we are sorry for this inconvenience to them. In this case, we enter their subscription for two years. Others have refused the V.P.P. because of having sent their Money Orders, which is proper to do. It would seem, therefore, that the best way to avoid this inadvertency would be for the subscriber to send his Money Order (if that be his wish) very soon after receiving the expiration notice. If he be willing to receive the V.P.P., he should not send us a Money Order.

2. Foreign Subscriptions

These are automatically renewed unless the reader informs us in advance. We mail the expiration notice early, and then send a bill with the first issue of the new annual subscription. Both come by sea mail which takes considerable time (about six weeks). Here again communications cross in the mails. A subscriber in Europe sent us a subscription for three years in advance and later received our bill for one year's subscription. Each of us wrote to the other at about the same date. In such a case, the European subscriber should ignore the bill. The same is true for our subscribers in South America and in North America; kindly recognize the time factor and understand that a bill received from us may not necessarily mean that we have failed to receive and record your welcome renewal in the meantime.

3. All Subscribers

Please show or mention the INDIA CULTURES QUARTERLY to your like-minded friends and associations. Help this non-profit effort to disseminate knowledge of the peoples of the earth.

A CURRICULUM THAT STUDIES INDIA'S PEOPLES

NOTE:—Many of us workers have been aware that theological education at the post-graduate level is highly academic. The Serampore Senate has initiated discussions intended to lead to another type of study for advanced students who are concerned with the practical problems of a parish. The following proposal summarizes nine years' correspondence and legislation. We believe that our India readers will welcome the information that follows, and that foreign readers may be interested in this attempt to utilize the social sciences in a theological curriculum. The syllabus has not yet been sanctioned, and the opinions of our readers are solicited.

H. H. Presler.

PROPOSED SYLLABUS

OF POST L. TH., POST G.TH. OR POST B. D. STUDIES

THE CHURCH AND THE CULTURES OF INDIA

PAPER ONE : History of India

(a) Ancient India from Early Times to 1206 A.D.

(b) Medieval India from 1207 to 1761 A.D.

(c) Modern India from 1762 through 1947.

PAPER TWO : Cultural Sociology

(a) Definition, scope and methods of cultural anthropology and sociology.

(b) The individual and society.

(c) Culture : The concept of culture; the nature of culture; the elements of culture; how to recognize and delimit a culture; patterns of culture; cultural psychological pattern; functional ensemble; how to classify cultures.

(d) Structure of Society : Kinship systems; status systems including caste and class; *rites de passage;* magic; language; symbol systems and iconography; folkways and mores; myths.

(e) Associations : family and marriage patterns in India; clan; tribal dormitories; rural and urban religious institutions.

(f) State : forms and functions; economic organization and the Hindu jajmani system; panchayat; law; primitive and modern.

(g) Christian Culture : biblical and historical background to Christianity.

(h) Social Research : methods of parish analysis.

PAPER THREE : Contemporary Cultures of India

(a) Simple Cultures : analysis of the concepts, "primitive society." "primitive religion." Descriptions of specific simple societies as follows : 1. Selected from those in the student's own state, and if possible, parish; 2. two tribal cultures outside the student's own state. Literature pertaining to the entrance of simple cultures into Hinduism or Sikhism, or into another major religion including Christianity. Present problems of Christian workers among the simple societies.

(b) Complex Cultures : analysis of the concepts, 'modern urban society,' 'modern industrial society,' 'specialization of occupations,' 'interlocking directorates.' Description of a Western metropolitan area, and of an Indian urban area.

(c) The Interaction of Simple and Complex Cultures : analysis of the concepts, 'personal disorganization,' 'social disorganization,' 'institutional disorganization.' Adaptations made by religious institutions in the midst of such interaction.

PAPER FOUR

Social and Cultural Change in India : the impact of modern industrial culture on Indian society; diffusion, competion, invasion, conflict, assimilation; acculturation; the process of secularism as understood by the religionist and social scientist and its effects on belief and church participation; disintegration of Indian cultures before industrialism; urbanism as a way of life; ruralism as a way of life; breakdown of rural cultures before urbanism; characteristics of the rural, and urban parish.

THESIS

The thesis shall be written by the student after required reading in the pertinent literatures, and after field work investigations yielding such information and evidence as shall be a contribution to knowledge. The student shall use the mother tongue of the respondents.

SUGGESTED TOPICS

(a) A Christian contribution to an Indian Culture, or to an aspect thereof. This shall be a study of an actual expression of New Testament Christianity in a specific Indian setting; or, of some 'indigenous form' through which such Christianity is being expressed, such as Indian church music, an Indian Christian institution like an ashram, an Indian Christian economic organization like a Christian land colony, etc. etc. In each case there must be a Christian personnel or community embodying the matter for study and accessible for field investigations.

(b) Socio-Cultural Analysis of a Parish.

(c) A Description of a Specific Non-Christian Culture which is stable or undergoing change.

(d) Research in the nature and process of rural-urban cultural change affecting the local church as an institution; or, of some other process of cultural change accessible to field observation.

(e) Some other topic approved by the Serampore Senate.

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MID INDIA REGION

Primitive Religions in the City

Dr. Henry H. Presler

Note: This series is contributed by the director of the Department of Organized Research of Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur, M.P., India, and is based upon intensive "field studies"; in this context it were truer to call them "ward studies" (after city wards), or "mohulla studies" (after city communities).

In the last issue of this magazine I introduced the anachronism of jungle religion in an urban context by presenting examples of animism next door to the factory and laboratory. The hypothesis was proposed that in our city the urban way of life has not dimmed primitive animism, there being evidence that urbanism actually fans the simple animism into such intensity that amenable populations are more firmly persuaded of it.

In this issue the title will be further illustrated by another example of primitive religion, namely totemism. A totem is an animal, plant or natural object from which a sib name is derived, and toward which the sib members feel a special relationship, and display special attitudes.

Totemism is a form of social organization and religious practice typically involving an intimate association between sibs and their totems, which are regarded as ancestors or as supernaturally connected with an ancestor, which are tabooed as food, and which give the sibs their names." 1

Has totemism come to town? Need we travel to the end of the railway line, and then to the termination of the road, and thereafter follow a lane and finally a footpath to the habitat of totemism? Or, is this form of primitive religion also in the city under our noses? But the answers are not nearly as decisive as with animism. Primitive animism is abundant in our city; totemism in overt form is scarce, in covert form somewhat frequent. The following paragraphs will enumerate the instances of totemic thinking, totems, and totemism in this mid-India city.

1. H.P. Fairchild, *Dictionary of Sociology* (New York, Philosophical Library, 1944).

I

Totemic Thinking

Totemic modes of thought are mentioned first in order to safeguard ourselves from reading into ritual objects and cult practices what we are seeking. The custom of refraining from cutting a certain species of tree suggests totemism, but must not be assumed to be such unless totemic habits of thought are prevailing in the minds of the people living around them. We would like to avoid imitating Sigmund Freud who, in his book *Totem and Tabu* (2) foisted on to primitives (whom he had never seen) the interpretations arrived at by him in connection with clinical practice in Vienna, and thus, called totemism an Oedipus Complex; similarly we do not wish to be guilty of defining animism as totemism. Either subjective error may be avoided by letting the people themselves tell what lies in their minds.

What do primitives think who have a totemic mentality? According to Reinach, *Code du Totemisme* they hold twelve basic doctrines each of which will be illustrated by testimonies of our city dwellers.

1. Certain animals, plants or natural objects may neither be killed, destroyed or eaten, but individual members of the species are reared by human beings and cared for by them.

In our city the orthodox community deeply resents the butchering of cattle for meat-eaters, and only adherents of another religion work in the slaughter house. The orthodox are sometimes able to stop butchering, and several beefless months follow The orthodox carry on a steady propaganda in print and verbally, and have founded and maintain *gaushala* or cow shelters where unclaimed animals are kept and fed until their natural deaths.

Similarly, rats must not be killed in our town.

> **The informant said that his community does catch rats ... but they take the cages to the jungle and let them loose, alive. The municipality tries to persuade the people to kill rats, but are not wholly successful. 2641–I**

Monkeys cannot be destroyed, no matter their depredations. The sentiment is so strong that a non-believer will hesitate before shooting the aerial robbers in his fruit trees.

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2. (London, Kegan Paul Ltd., 1950)

3. S. Reinatch, *Cultes Mythes et Religions* (Paris, 1905).

Turning to plants, we notice strong sentiment against cutting or burning certain trees. On no account may a pipal tree be cut.

L—A—was a rich man, whose house near the temple was endangered by a strong branch of a pipal tree growing towards it. He thought that thieves might climb the tree and enter his house, and decided to cut it off. But many opposed this plan. Being rich, L—A—was able to carry through with his depredation. After many days he set out for a journey, and died on the way, being buried by the common servants of that town. After some days, his son went there and dug up the body of his father, which had been disgraced by burial. This was all due to cutting the branch of the pipal tree. (2114)

There was a pipal tree at the northwest corner of the temple. The municipality ordered some men to cut it down. But unfortunately or fortunately, they suffered from some sort of sickness and died. Soon other woodcutters also died. Then the officer who gave the order died. (2490)

A very similar case, said the informent, happened at Bombay. The municipality thought of making a tramway through a part of the city, but a pipal stood in the route. So the municipal board chairman ordered to cut that tree. Those who happened to carry out the order soon died. Therefore, now not a single person who is orthodox will dare to cut a pipal tree. (2490)

Another said: About twenty years ago there was a Marathi family who used to live in that house, and consisted of ten adult members. The family owned the house close to which was a pipal tree. The father thought, one day, that one of its branches would be very dangerous in the future, and decided to cut it off. Until that time the family members were worshiping this tree daily, by pouring water, offering flowers and vermillion, and sometimes coconuts. After cutting off the branch, the father became blind, and overcome with chagrin, committed suicide by hanging himself with a rope. After his death, the son ran off with a Marathi girl whose parents had refused to sanction the marriage because of the pipal tree affair. Those two drowned themselves in a tank by tying her sari around themselves and jumping in. Then the old mother died. Now nobody lives in their house, as every body is afraid of the tree. (2498)

Not only must the pipal tree not be cut, but some say it cannot be offended.

A woman narrated that there was a Kurmi family living near a pipal tree and they had a boy baby. In the hot summer nights they made the mistake of sleeping out under the pipal tree. One night the child began to cry loudly, and the tree was offended. The baby took violently ill and died. Nobody should sleep under a pipal tree. No one should even go near a pipal, because you can't know whether the god in it may come out for a walk and hurt you. (2186)

The abhorrence of cutting a pipal tree is widespread in this city, the same repugnance felt by the primitive clan against cutting its totemic plant. Further, the nim tree is closely guarded by totemic thinking.

> The respondent said; There was a huge neem tree at this shrine. One day it became completely dried up. We don't know why this happened. So my forefather thought of cutting it down, and engaged a man. Later he used it as fuel. Many mishaps followed the cutting of that neem. In the first place the *madhya* (shrine enclosure) fell down. Soon after, the woodcutter died. At last my forefather died. Then his whole house was ruined by the curse of the god. My uncle got frightened and left with his whole family, to live elsewhere from the curse. He went due to fear. (2758)

A mango tree also may not be cut.

> There was a mango tree inside the temple which used to have four kinds of fruit : matnagar, dania, kalmi and mandama. When it was seen fallen to the ground, the municipality asked it to be cut. One who ventured to cut it, died on the spot, and the other three workmen fled away at once, when the mango tree fell down, a liquid *like blood* came out of the trunk of the tree. (2490)

The protection given to the banyan tree is mentioned below under Idea Number Four.

Other possible totems may not be cut or injured, including mother earth. In accounting for the low social status of the Kachhis (a caste of field laborers) the informant said:

> We people started in by cutting Mother Earth (a divinity) with our *kurpis* (blades used by agriculturists). Thus, we did sin against the earth goddess. For this the goddess cursed us and condemned us to our present low estate, and said we would always have to earn our food by hard labor; nor could we ever get anything ahead to improve our lot. (2765)

The second basic idea in totemism, according to Reinach, is: *An animal which has died an accidental death is mourned over and buried with the same honours as a member of the clan.* This is noticed in our city in the case of those castes that bury their own dead and also sacrifice pigs. The pig is buried after the sacrifice, and no part is eaten; the entire carcass is buried near the shrine. But some castes first eat the pork and then bury the bones. There is one case of an orthodox man whose group buries the human corpse; this fellow buried his partridge, and erected a small (about a yard high) sepulchre above the grave, constructing it of bricks and cement.

The third fundamental idea of totemism is that *the eating prohibition extends only to one particular part of the animal's body.* The evidence of this idea in our city of railways and buses is in the very common custom of a layman's not eating the head of the animal he sacrifices. I do not recall any case in my experience in which the head is taken away with the carcass for the communion meal. The blood likewise, is poured out at the sacred location, and not cooked, nor made into sausage as do the Germans in Europe today.

Fourthly when one of the animals usually spared has to be killed under the stress of necessity, apologies are offered to it and an attempt is made by various artifices and evasions to mitigate the violation of the taboo—that is to say, of the murder.

An illustration of this in the plant kingdom is the following, taken from my city file of interviews:

> When this tree (a banyan) was cut down by the order of the municipality, the men who were engaged to cut the tree, offered some sweets and poured water, and asked the god to let them cut the tree, and then they would do it. But still one of them was seriously ill for one week. Then his wife went to the place where the tree was and offered some prayer that her husband should be forgiven, and then he became alright. (2120)

Fifth. when the animal is made the victim of a ritual sacrifice, it is solemnly bewailed. No instance of such lamentation has come to my attention in our big city. Ritual sacrifices are legion, in spite of official discouragement. An account of one such follows:

> There were seventy-nine women nineteen men and about fifteen children, gathered in the cremation ground, and sitting around a pit. The priest first deepened the pit to about two feet, and widened it to about a yard. One of the women began to twist her body and to make screaming noises. Then she rolled down, and at once some of the women rushed to her and removed the gruel pot and worship artifacts from her vicinity. They took the plantains, and sliced cucumbers away from her. Her sari was lightly tied around her hips as she began to crawl and creep outside the square made on the ground by the sacred thread. She tried to smell, as an animal smells, the gruel pots of the devotees. Then she stood up and danced, and two other women became possessed and did likewise. A young man was seized by the spirit and caught a young woman by the hair of her head; she screamed and fled. Then the killing of the animals took place. The necks were cut and immediately placed in the mouths of the possessed women who drank the blood pumped by the expiring fowls and goats. Their faces became covered with the blood, but most of it went down their throats They gulped it down with relish. Then the possessed men seized the live cocks and bit off their heads using their own teeth. Then a knife was handed to one of the dancing woman, who ran towards a pig and stabbed it and drank the blood. Then the possessed persons ran to the pit and stooping on all fours imitated animals and gobbled quantities of boiled rice, as animals would obtain food (without using any limb.)

Here I interrupt this account to mention the next bit of totemic ideology.

Sixth, *the totem animal gives warning to members of its clan.* To continue with this urban ritual being described as of the year 1953.

> Some of the young women came to the possessed woman and asked what blessing she will give them. One of the mothers brought her own son aged about twenty years who is unemployed. The mother asked whether he would get any employment in the coming year. The possessed woman went near the boy and gave him a bloody kiss and went away ....Then the men took up the carcasses of their sacrificed animals and went to different corners of the cremation ground, and pealed off the hides. They offered them and put them into coves and walked away They could have sold the same to tanners but did not do so. See Idea Number Six below. (1311 A 11-53)

Not only may totemic ecstatics foretell events, but totemic trees, as indicated in the account of a tree in the main bazar of our city. The fore part of the myth is a long and rambling account of a battle in which the hero wins by touching a snake in the said tree, which snake immediately turned into a strong bow. The tale winds up with the totemic prognostications as follows :

> Then the rishi who was living *in the tree*, appeared and asked the king what reward he would get for carrying the bow on his head (in the branches) for the last fourteen years. The king replied that every year, an arrow would be shot at the tree, and should juice (milk) flow from the wound, people might drink it. Accordingly each year an arrow is aimed at the vanni tree. At that time if milk comes out, the succeeding year will be prosperous; but if red juice (blood) comes out from that tree, the succeeding year will be full of woe and sorrow. (1597 b S 30-52)

Seventh, *on solemn occasions and at religious ceremonies the skins of certain animals are worn. Where totemism is still in force, they are the totem animals.* In illustrating this concept, the writer would point to the fact that several centuries ago, the seal of the reigning dynasty was that of a tiger attacking an elephant. Today in our city, at two annual festivals, so-called *sherwalle*, or men wearing tiger skins roam the city. Or, due to excessive heat. they paint bodies yellow, and daub black stripes thereupon, fastening a tail made of cloth and cotton to their persons. Various explanations are given for this custom which relate to the particular festivals which are themselves non-totemic. I shall refer to this later as an instance when an older totemic custom may have taken on new meaning in terms of another ideology superseding the old.

Eighth, *clans and individuals adopt the names of animals viz. of the totem animals.* This practice is not frequent, and those with names of animals and belonging to formally educated persons would deny any totemic significance. Yet it is impressive to note that *nag*, the snake as popularly worshiped in our city, is also a fairly common name of persons. Although the association is not as happy as might be desired, these persons show no inclination to change their names. Govind, whose root means cow, is also a popular name. Etc. Etc.

Ninth, *many clans make use of representations of animals on their standards and weapons; the men have pictures of animals painted or tattooed on their bodies.* Aside from local athletic teams, this usage is not observed. But temples built before 1857, and especially those dating from about 1750 are marked by animals and birds on their corbels, and on their door lintels. The first king of the Gonds was selected about 1000 A. D. by the alighting of a bird upon his shoulder, and this well-known legend may account for the numerous birds on our oldest city temples, the bird being the totem of the Gond king.

The tenth belief in totemism is that *if the totem animal is dangerous or formidable, it is supposed to spare members of the clan named after it.* Some city people hold this belief, also. Said one :

> All the twenty-four prophets were, in their life time, kind to living beings. Many kinds of poisonous snakes passed by their *asana* (seat of meditation) but not a single snake did any harm to these mendicants. Once A-G- was sitting in his ashram, and a snake was coiled on the door sill. A layman could not enter for fear of the reptile, and called from the outside. Then A-G-went to the door and asked the snake to move away, and the snake at once moved to one side so that the layman could enter. (313 F)

> This god is very fierce, with power to kill anybody. He takes the form of buffaloes mostly, but also of a tiger, dog or cat. He runs after the man who does not worship him, or who ignores his sacred place. If we stopped whitewashing this stone. then he would take many forms and trouble us.... There was a young couple who used to live near this stone. They had a child. Once this god took the form of a tiger and took away the child, and they could not find it. People went in search to no avail. That very night the tiger brought the child and placed it before the devi (the god is the protector of the devi) and disappeared. People saw the child in the hands of the temple priest who narrated how the god in the form of a tiger had returned the child. Then they recognized that this god lives in the stone, and began to worship him regularly. (2078)

Eleventh, *the totem animal protects and gives warning to members of its clan.* In our town the clan has its substitute in the informal band of adherents who worship the particular animal or plant god, or who recognize the plant or animal as peculiarly its own.

A city dweller told the following story :

Once in olden times the Five Brothers had to fight their One Hundred Cousins. The mother asked the god to give his mightiest strength and power to her sons, who were outnumbered. The Five Brothers had been preparing an elephant of clay in order to absorb its strength, but of course, the One Hundred Cousins could easily build a bigger elephant. Looking at this grave situation, she underwent prayer and requested the god for special divine help. The god heard her and sent his own huge live elephant to the Five Brothers who won the battle. So a section of the people has begun to worship this elephant on the Elephant Festival Day. They undergo a fast, call a Brahmin, make clay elephants, and take out a procession. On this day they expect that the strength and power of the elephant will come to their aid throughout the ensuing year. (2652)

Another urbanite told this story: Once the unbelievers were coming to destroy the holy place, and our ancestors were getting ready to defend it with one hundred camels. But the enemy stole into our camp by night and led away our camels. The enemy then thought to parley and called for our representative, demanding of him: 'Now what can you do against me?' Our man answered, 'The holy place belongs to our god, and it is his duty to save it from destruction. Give back our camels and we will show you.' The enemy refused and sent him back. While returning he saw a great flock of eagles in the sky, each bearing a stone. The eagles dove on the enemy's elephants and on our camels in his possession, dropping the stones on them. The enemy's soldiers were likewise hit. In the end the animals were killed and the soldiers all died. Thus, the eagles helped us save the holy place. (2921)

The twelfth feature of the totemic mentality, according to Reinach, is this: *The members of the totemic clan often believe that they are related to the totem animal by the bond of a common ancestry.* There are plenty of city people here who have this belief.

The goddess wanted regular floral offerings, but one day the gardener failed to do his duty. The goddess asked him about his neglect and he replied that the previous night he could not sleep, and had kept to his bed throughout the morning. The goddess thought to herself, 'There must be two men engaged in gardening; if one fails to do his duty, the other will work.' Thinking this, she asked the man to turn his back to her, which he did. Then she asked him to open his *kanchh* (one corner of his cloth between the legs, a part of his garment), and to shake it well. He did so and on looking around, to his surprise he saw another man *rising from the ground behind him.* (That is, created out of the earth, totem to the gardener caste). (1957)

When the monkey god was crossing the sea, one of the drops of his sweat fell down into the sea. A fish swallowed that drop and as a result gave birth to M—who was one of the great heroes of his time (2318)

(Jawara is sprouting grain, prepared ritually). The growing of jawara, said the informant, started because the god of hell had no residents. So he asked the Great God to supply him with people for hell, and was told to go to the world to tell people to keep jawara in case they had no wealth or children. They did so and the people born therefrom are those who commit murder by offering living creatures as sacrifices, and who are, in consequence, condemned to go to hell. (2330B)

Several important castes in our city claim to be descendents of the sun and as such are called, *suryavanch* or the sun's generations; whereas others assert they are *chandravanch* or the moon's generations.

The purpose of the foregoing mythological spread is to demonstrate the existence of a typically totemic ideology in our city, made known to us by the people themselves, and without our inquiring specifically as to possible totemic beliefs. I may now be delivered from the charge of reading into my field work materials, the definitions of totemism. That is, just because people worship animals is not certain evidence that they do so totemistically; but if their mythological beliefs and practices are saturated with ideas and rites typical of totemism, we may suppose their present procedures have at least a totemic background.

To cinch the point, let me give this account from a city man, should any of my readers still doubt that vestigial totemism is present in our urban environment:

Plants and trees have power in them. The case is like this. Once there was a sadhu in Allahabad who had great fame, and another lived here in our town. Both were regarded as great physicians, and slowly, they came to know of each other, and each wanted to prove himself superior to the other. The sadhu of Allahabad asked an ordinary man to go to our town to see our sadhu, and enroute to sleep underneath imli trees only. He did so and on arriving here was in an awful condition. He had crumpled down and was about to die. So our sadhu asked him as to whence he had come and for what purpose. The man said, "the Allahabad sadhu sent me to see you, and ordered my sleeping under imli trees only. I did so and my condition is this." Thereupon our sadhu said, "Now you go back to him but this time you sleep underneath pipal trees only." The sufferer did so and on reaching the confluence of the Jumna and Ganges, he found himself a changed man, having regained his lost health. So don't think that these plants and trees are ordinary; they have power in them. *They are all gods and goddesses*, but because of their karma they have become trees; yet they retain their powers. (2616)

In this article I am not giving statistics as to the percentage of urbanites holding such totemic opinions, and will merely say that in mid-India they constitute at least half of town-dwellers.

II

Totemic Vestiges

The second portion of this article is intended to enumerate those urban phenomena observed by me which, in view of the totemic mentality just described require strong evidence to prove they are not of totemic origin. That is, it seems to me that the burden of proof is on him who would deny that the following instances are of totemic significance.

A

Animals

1. Live animals considered sacred in mid-India towns: the monkey, cow, elephant, snake, buffalo.

2. Sculptored animals considered to be ridden by gods: boar, mouse, crocodile, horse, peacock, swan, tiger, eagle, lion, bull.

3. Other animals in urban iconography: bear, dog, fish, peacock, pig, deer, the five snakes.

B

Trees

1. Trees growing in towns which are considered as either the habitat of the god, or as the very god: pipal, neem, banyan, brd or bargad, pakkar, imli, mango, amla aodumbar, fig (by some castes), saja, and cases where two trees of different species grow together.

2. Trees required ritually in urban religious institutions, i.e. their leaves or fruits: bel, mahua, sitaphul banana.

C

Plants

1. Plants growing in towns and thought to be the habitat of the god or the very god: tulsi, jawara, naglata, kans grass, and perhaps certain creepers.

2. Plants whose flowers are preferable for religious rituals: genda, chameli, sada suhagin, chandni.

D

Signs

Here are meant symbols or likenesses of possible totems: the nal or crescent (for the moon), a wooden stick surrounded by a sheaf of kans grass (for a goddess).

E

Food Tabus

Food tabus are too numerous for the space allowed in this short article. Most of them pertain to particular castes today (the clans of yesterday).

F

Rituals

The communal gathering at which an animal is slaughtered with religious rituals (usually with reference to a god or goddess *not* thought to be in the animal itself), followed by a communion meal, is a common feature of the religious life of this city. Such sacrifices are thought necessary to appease the god.

III

Conclusions

1. There certainly are vestiges of totemism in mid-India cities. If H. Whitehead (4) could infer some years ago that totemism is one of the roots or the root of village religion in South India. and find a sympathetic reading public, we may also infer the same for some urban religions of mid-India.

2. But if you ask me whether the local urbanites are aware of being totemists, the answer would be, first, that probably no forthright totemist is thus aware; he probably never heard of totemism. Second, my informants do not know why they worship some animals, do not harm other animals, and would not think of eating still others.

> **These old customs which are kept in our country are not wrong. Our ancestors knew the significance of all these things. (2641—1)**
>
> **I was trying to find out why people eat under an amla tree. I read the book called *Kartik Mahatwa*, and another named *Ichcha Naumi*. In neither book was there an answer to my question. Each book says that if you eat underneath an amla tree on the day of Ichcha Naumi, all your sins of the past will be cleared off and you will go directly to the place where god X lives. But the books do not give any answer to the question as to why this may be so, or as to what was the religious or historical event underlying the custom. (2782)**

The people do not consider the possibility of totemism being the root of their animal and plant worship, and most of them are

4. H. Whitehead, *The Village Gods of South India* (Calcutta Association Press, 1921).

not as curious as the last informant just quoted. It simply does not occur to them to inquire into the history of their totemic practices.

3. Vestiges of totemism in the city are mixed with other forms of primitive religion or overlain by other forms. A pure case of totemism has not yet been seen in the city by the writer.

4. No totemic cult has been found in our city. The outward trappings of totemism are no doubt present; but the functional ensemble is absent. This brings me back to an earlier question in this article: Must one go to the jungle to study pure totemism? The answer is, Yes.

5. With reference to the previous article in this series on primitive Religion in the City, I would affirm that totemism is less prevalent in the mid-India city than animism. Or, I would say that the urban process is less destructive to animism than to totemism. One cause may be that the city eliminates dangerous animals and is inimical to trees and plants. When our valley was a collection of scattered villages between which panthers and tigers roamed (the same are occasionally seen in the province today), totemic responses seem to have been more numerous than in this present city of electric lights, judging from the testimonies of men still living to tell the tale. The destruction of a krite on my verandah (a reptile whose sting brings death to a human in three minutes), and the rendevous made by a three foot reptile in my garage, is a reminder that totemism in the city is not a forgotten response.

CHAPTER XLI

Lack of Education

N.B. In this chapter the word "educated" refers not only to those who have received formal training at educational centers but also to thos who are self taught.

Stanza 1

Lecturing to an audience without (the support of) books is like playing on a chess board without squares.

N.B. This is the usual translation. But the word translated 'books' might also be rendered (plumber's) line. In that case it would mean "speaking without reference to any criteria of validity is playing on a chess board without squares."

Stanza 2

The aspiration of an uneducated man to speak in public is like a woman devoid of feminine graces attracting a man.

Stanza 3

The uneducated man might seem to be competent, so long as he does not speak in the audience of the educated.

Stanza 4

The educated will not accept an uneducated man even if he is acute in intelligence.

Stanza 5

The uneducated man's honour is shattered when the educated man speaks.

Stanza 6

The uneducated can be counted of value only in the census. They are useless like the uncultivable land.

Stanza 7

He who does not perceive the grandeur of books is like a beautiful gypsum doll.

Stanza 8

The wealth of the unlearned is more pernicious than the poverty of the learned.

Stanza 9

The uneducated even if well born, do not become equals of the educated.

Stanza 10

The difference between the educated and the uneducated is as much as the variation of men from beasts

CHAPTER XLII

Questioning (Knowledge derived through hearing). (That is improving knowledge by asking questions of people who know)

Stanza 1

Wealth of wealth is the wealth of hearing which wealth is the head of all wealth.

Stanza 2

When there is no food for the ear, only a little can be given to the stomach.

N.B. 'food for the ear' – intellectual food, obtained through questioning; a "little....for the stomach" – because more would be pampering to the flesh.

Stanza 3

Those fed on the food of hearing, though they live in this world, are fed like heavenly beings with the food that does not surfeit.

Stanza 4

Let one ask questions even if he be unlearned. It will help him in difficult situations.

Stanza 5

As a stick is helpful in walking through slippery places, even so are the words of the people of good conduct.

Stanza 6

Be it ever so little, let one hear it, if it is good. Such by all means yield lasting glory.

Stanza 7

Even if he has been misguided, the man of knowledge will not misguide others.

Stanza 8

Ears that hear, but do not convey meaning should be called deaf.

Stanza 9

He whose knowledge is not acute (literally he whose questions are not acute) can hardly be expected to be appreciative (i. e. will ask derogatory questions).

Stanza 10

What does it matter whether those that do not taste with their ears but only with their tongues, whether they live or die ?

CHAPTER XLIII

Stanza 1

Knowledge for the king is the instrument to protect people from (internal) destruction and also an impregnable fort against (external) enemies.

Stanza 2

Knowledge is controlling the mind from going astray and choosing the good after discrimination.

Stanza 3

The man of knowledge speaks hard-to-be-expressed truths in easy language; moreover, he perceives the subtle truth in other's words.

Stanza 4

Knowledge consists in perceiving the REAL in whatever is said by whomsoever.

Stanza 5

True knowledge does not blossom and then fade away like earthly things.

Stanza 6

True knowledge consists in walking in conformity with the world's (good).

N. B. The poet here emphasizes that kings should not think in terms of their own selfish interest.

Stanza 7

Those who discover consequences are men of knowledge. Those who do not discern are fools.

Stanza 8

Not being afraid of that which should be afraid of is fool-hardiness: the man of true knowledge is afraid of what he should be afraid of.

Stanza 9

There is no disease called fear to him who has the knowledge to prevent (evil consequences).

Stanza 10

He who has knowledge has everything. He who has not knowledge has nothing.

CHAPTER XLIV

Eschewing Errors

Stanza 1

The wealth of him who has no pride, anger or meanness will multiply abundantly.

N. B. The man referred to is the king as this chapter is on politics.

Stanza 2

Niggardliness, inglorious humiliation and excessive pleasure do not befit kings.

Stanza 3

Even an error as small as a grain of mustard seed in one's own self is deemed as big as a palm tree, by him who shuns reproach.

Stanza 4

The enemy that brings final disaster is error. So shun error.

Stanza 5

He who does not protect before evil comes will perish like a haystack set on fire.

Stanza 6

The king who frees first his own defects and then tries to correct others will have no defect at all.

Stanza 7

The wealth of him who produces it just for increasing it and not for its lawful use, comes to nought.

Stanza 8

Wealth-attachment-mentality is unique (i. e defies classification).

Stanza 9

Neither esteem much yourself; nor harbour thoughts on actions that do not produce (good).

Stanza 10

Love without your attachments being known (by your enemies) so that no one can hurt you.

CHAPTER XLV

Availing Great Men's Help

Stanza 1

Let him (the king) know the value of the friendship of great men and make use of it by all (lawful) means.

Stanza 2

Let him win the friendship of those great men who can relieve present evils and prevent forthcoming ones.

Stanza 3

Of all knowledge that is difficult to secure, the most difficult is the knowledge of securing great personalities as one's own possessions.

Stanza 4

Being the willing follower of greater personalities than one's own self is of all powers the greatest power.

Stanza 5

Those that surround the king are his eyes. So he must surround them.

Note The king's eyes are his ministers who surround him; for without them he cannot get any information "He must surround them" means he must be circumspect or see around them."

Stanza 6

Enemies cannot injure the king who has worthy relations and who walks worthily.

Stanza 7

No one can destroy the ruler of helpers.

Stanza 8

The king who has no helpers will perish even if there is no one to injure him.

Stanza 9

There can be no profit without capital. Similarly there can be no security for a king without supporters.

Stanza 10

It is better for a monarch to fight with ten enemies single handed than forsake relations with good people.

BOOK REVIEW

GOVIND CHANDRA PANDE; *Studies in the Origins of Buddhism* (Allahabad: University of Allahabad). pp. 600, price Rs. 25/-

This is volume I of the Ancient History Research Series conducted by the department of Ancient History, Culture, and Archaeology of the University of Allahabad, and it "attempts to trace the original teachings of Buddha as distinct from the mass of later ideas in which they are embedded at present". The aim of the author is to relate the doctrines of the Buddha to his life and times and the tendencies of thought and culture current previously.

This book has three parts. Part one is on studies in "Early Buddhist Sources" and is one of the toughest parts of the book for the average student to understand. The chronology of the Buddhist Canon, the stratification of Nikayas and Suttahipata are described in detail. The method adopted is the same as the one of *Formgeschiste* school in New Testament Criticism. However there is one factor in Buddhism which makes this study more complicated. That is, in Christian Church History after the acceptance of the formulated Canon, rival scriptures lost all their force whereas in Buddhism several sects and subsects arose with the result that there was no central organization and each of these sects or even subsects were autonomous. They counteracted on one another and as such their scriptures were affected. Dr. Pande has attempted to give due emphasis to the doctrinal evolutions and interpolations taking into account vocabulary, linguistic features, Geography and data from political and social history. He divides the data into early, late, or uncertain categories and by the application of his principles assigns the suttas their respective place. The present reviewer is not competent to pronounce judgment on the conclusions arrived at. Time will confirm or modify them.

Part two deals with the historical and cultural background of Early Buddhism. Here the author wants to show that the prevedic civilization is responsible for the pessimistic, atheistic, pluralistic, realistic and ascetic tendencies. "We find, thus, that in the vedic period there existed two distinct religious and Cultural traditions- the strictly orthodox and Aryan tradition of the Brahmans, and on the fringe of their society, the straggling culture of the Munis and Sramanas most probably going back to pre-Vedic and pre-aryan origins. Towards the close of the period, the two

streams tended to mingle and the result was the great religious ferment from which Buddhism originated. Thus he comes to the conclusion that Buddhism was not a Protestant revolt against current Brahmanism, but that it was rather an inner evolution of Brahmanism brought about mainly through the influence of Muni Sramanas. So the rest of the book is only a review of the development of Vedic religion from this stand point. The last part deals with studies in early Buddhist doctrines.

However it seems to us in dealing with doctrinal development the great founder of a great religion is put on a procrustean bed of the principles of criticism so that the resultant life sketch might fit in neatly with the theory that thought develops uniformly into complexity from simplicity. Gigantic personalities can and do transcend such presuppositions. However, it must be stated, that the author tells that he is considering the leading events of Buddha's life in the light of the psychology of saints and prophets and of trying to determine the influence of his life on his doctrines and to this canon he strictly adheres. He follows the same method with reference to doctrines also.

The work is based on a comprehensive study of original sources: Buddhist Writings not only in India but also China, Tibet and Japan, of authoritative orientalists, French, German, and English, of Vedic and Jain literature in Pali, and Sanskrit languages. Since his quotations from German, French and Pali are profuse, for his readers to get the maximum value of his studies, it would be better if the author gives the translation in the footnotes in the future editions of this book. The book will be found very informative.

THE NATURE OF THE DIVINE

Part I

By K. O. Sam, B. D.

INTRODUCTION

The history of religion throughout the world is partly the history of man's beliefs and convictions concerning a power or powers outside himself which he has considered to be super-human and either of a divine or demonic character. The divine is not limited to that which works only for man's welfare. It may be opposed to man, setting itself over against him in such a fashion that it is man's enemy. But even as foe, the divine element which confronts man is a primary concern of many religious systems. Religion is basically concerned with the relationship between humanity and divinity. The essential characteristic of a religion is generally held to be the belief in the existence of the divine.

With the exception of Theravadin or Southern Buddhism, a belief in the divine is the foundation upon which the religious systems of mankind rest. Goodness and truth are often related to the very nature of the divine. Human salvation or the fulfilment of man is also related to the divine which is the source of man and all that is. When this belief is pre—supposed men try to understand the nature of the divine with a view generally to appease the divine, or arrange their lives according to the loftiest expression of the various aspects of the nature in the divine.

In this paper the characteristic attributes, traits and qualities are taken to be " the nature ". The divine need not be defined in the introduction to a paper devoted to the task of such a definition or definitions, and may be delayed until each section on each religion. For this study the approved scriptures of the undermentioned living non-christian religions are examined, and also the historical development is traced:- Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism.

I

BUDDHISM

"Buddhism, like all the religions and religious philosophies which flourished in that age, is a way of salvation, and it has in common with all of them certain fundamental assumptions. Foremost among these is the conviction that salvation must be achieved by each man for himself. No god can deliver him"1. Buddhism did not originate out of a concern with the nature of the divine, nor out of what was considered to be an action of the divine. On the other hand in its first formative centuries Buddhism was a religion with a message of how man might escape from the present existence which enslaves him. Only in later centuries as the religion spread beyond India, did concern for the nature of the divine become important.

Buddha's Own Position Regarding the Nature of the Divine

Buddha rejected the usual Hindu presupposition concerning the divine. His presuppositions were based upon a point of view present in a negative Samkhya philosophy, in which the very existence of a divine was doubted since every thing was to be explained in terms of soul and matter. With the two given essences of soul and matter as the basic stuff of existence which is the result of the inter-action of the two, Buddha needed no intervention of a divine initiation or power. In accordance with this thought the primitive Buddhist community also reflected that Buddha had a negative belief about the divine because the divine is not only unknowable by man, but unnecessary and consequently nonexistent. This primitive Buddhism had no form of worship for there was no being to whom man owed homage. After the time of Buddha, about 560 B.C. question regarding the divine arose.

> The first great doctrinal controversy in Buddhism was about the nature of the Buddha. The school of the great council, (Mahasanghikas) maintained that Buddha's nature was transcendent, free from all the imperfections of corporeal existence, and his life absolutely spotless; his every word had a deep spiritual sense which each hearer interprets to his own edification, and all his teaching was perfect. The body of the Buddha is above all limitations, his power is unlimited; he needs no rest nor sleep; his knowledge is immediate and intuitive 2.

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1 G. F. Moore, *History of Religions* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 38 George Srteet, 1914), Vol. I. p. 291.

2 G.F. Moore. *Ibid.*, p. 304.

Later Divisions. The original break between the Northern and Southern, popularly known as Mahayana and Hinayana, Buddhism arose to a large degree over their separate understanding of the nature of the Buddha, who was deified.

Mahayana Scriptures. They are filled with super-human beings who are of a divine nature. Mahayana has placed special emphasis upon the existence of beings who serve as saviours and guides to man in his quest for salvation. Because of this firm belief Northern Buddhism has been forced to develop a complex theory of the nature of the divine. For them Gautama Sakyamuni the earthly Buddha, is but one earthly incarnation of the eternal Buddha who exists in countless worlds and in numberless periods of time. So Ashby says, "The Buddha of the great Mahayana Scriptures partakes of all of the power and purpose which we can discover in the Christian and Muslim theories concerning the Divine" 3.

The Mahayana developed a system of sub-deities subordinate to the Supreme Eternal Buddha. They are either Bodhisattavas who are striving to aid men in their attempt to escape from the limitations of human existence, or they are heavenly beings created by the eternal Buddha for the purpose of running the universe and carrying out his will. For most people these are objects of worship. The earthly Buddha, Sakyamuni is usually subordinated in the divine hierarchy. All existence including the many deities is the result of a first cause or principle. To the theologian the Eternal Buddha seated upon the vulture peak directing all worlds and adored by all creation in countless universes is the divine principle pervading all existence.

The Mahayana Formula. The conception of the divine nature in Mahayana Buddhism is best understood by the formula or doctrine of the *Three Bodies* (Trikaya).

1. The lowest of the three aspects or categories of the divine is the *Nirmanakaya* or *Condesention* body. This is the form or manifestation of the divine which was present in the earthly Buddha who lived at a certain time in the world.

2. The next category of the divine is the *Sambhogakaya* or body of bliss. This is the divine in the capacity as God observable and knowable to mankind. It is the orderer and preserver of the universe, worshipped by men.

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3 P.H. Ashby, *The Conflict of Religions* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 115.

3. The highest body or category of Buddhahood is that of the *Dharmakaya* or the body of truth. This is the ultimate first principle. It is the divine from which all things proceed and to which all things return.

These three bodies are levels of enlightenment in man also.

> As the Vedanta has not only its transcendent Brahman without attributes, but its Brahman with attributes, personal God and object of religions devotion, so Mahayana Buddhism has beside its ontological absolute the conception of a supreme being endowed with all perfections. Intelligence, will and above all, love are not mere attributes but the essence of this being. The commonest and apparently the oldest, name for this being is Dharmakaya, often translated "Body of the law" (i.e., religion) 4.

The lay worshipper in the Mahayana has found such beings, in the Bodhisattava, Saviours who are the divine towards whom he looks. These beings fulfil his religious needs.

> In an eminent sense the Buddhas are manifestations or incarnations of the Dharmakaya. The motive of the incarnation is love: the compassion which fills the heart of the Bodhisattava for the suffering of beings who in their ignorance think thoughts, cherish desires, do deeds, whose consequences they must suffer from existence to existence, is in God of infinite compassion, and moves him to seek salvation of all 5.

The Mahayana Scriptures give the following attributes also for Buddha. "Sinless, yet suffering inexplicably" 6.

" Entered the world with a redemptive purpose ". " All knowing and all-seeing ". " Saviour of Gods and men ". " He is ever-lasting " [7]. Dhammapada Scriptures of Buddhism records the admiration of Buddha. " No fault in the perfectly enlightened, thoughtful Buddha ". " A king of universal kings, a conqueror " [8]. This section of the scriptures has a good deal to say on self control, self-conquest, self-purification and personal responsibility for

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4 G.F. Moore. *Ibid.*, p. 309.

5 ,, ,, *Ibid.*, p. 309.

6 F. Max Muller (Edited), *Sacred Books of the East*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), Vol.35, Vers. 178.

7 F. Max Muller (Edited), *Sacred Books of the East* (Lond: Oxford University Press, 1927). Vol. 21, Vers. 4,46, 181, 120, 302.

8 ,, ,, Vol. 10, Vers. 21,29 & 102.

salvation. Thus the theistic pretension of Mahayana formulated a doctrine around the nature of Buddha offering salvation and eternal life. At least in popular religion Buddha acquired the character of a theistic deity.

Hinayana, or the Southern Section of Buddhism developed a religious outlook demonstrated in its heavy reliance upon the adoration of the Buddha. This had strong appeal to the masses. Yet the Hinayana teachings were conservative and rigid. The Buddha is pictured here as an instructor of both gods and men. They all depend upon Buddha for their salvation. The Master's high prestige with the people culminated in his enthronement as a divine, omniscient, and compassionate figure whose many incarnations and superior qualities caught the public fancy and instilled enthusiasm in the minds of the followers.

The famous pali canon of primitive Buddhism which is taken over by this school called *Tripitaka* or the three Baskets contain some of the Buddha's way of virtue. When this was taken to Ceylon the Southern Theravada Buddhists created many deities of varied character.

> **These deities are often limited in many ways as is man. Their attributes and powers are fearsome, lovable, and worthy of respect from man. These deities often are, not only limited in the same manner as man, but do not possess the high potentialities that are man's. They become old, lose their faculties, and many experience death. In many respects they are of a sub human nature since they cannot ultimately partake of the blissful salvation of Nibbana which is available to man 9.**

As Buddhism spread to far countries like Japan and China, the Buddhahood was no longer only for Gautama; there were others to come. These were called Boddhisattavas, who built up perfect personalities in successive incarnations and then, though free from the bondage of the evil world, set aside their joy to help others. From an early period three in particular were adored: Maitreya, Manjuari and Avalokiteswara. A rather complicated polytheism arose, with deities, goddesses and trinities.

> **Although in primitive Buddhism as preached by the Buddha no place was left for God or for Divine immanence, in later Buddhism, especially of the popular type, both monistic and theistic ideas have found a place; and together with these, occasional suggestions of a divine indwelling in the world and in the believer's heart. 10.**

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9 P.H. Ashby, *Ibid.*, p. 113.

10 E. C. Dewick, *The Indwelling God* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938) P. 37.

The most striking and (for Buddhist doctrine) important conception of the divine was the uniform exaltation of the Buddha himself above the highest god. From the speculative and metaphysical point of view also the Buddhism of the Mahayana, in formulating the conception of the divine, gave expression to the familiar thought of a first principle, the primeval and essential cause of all that is. This determining principle and cause was known as the *Dharmakaya*, the body of righteousness or of the law; and was in theory identical with the Buddha, one of his three bodies, his essential and permanent nature, by virtue of which he was one with all existing beings and all existing beings were one with him. This *Dharmakaya* represented in fact the ancient Indian conception of Brahman, with one great difference, that the Buddhist philosophers never lost their hold on the personal element or attribution in the *Dharmakaya*.

Mahayana Buddhism upholds *Amitabha*, for the worship of millions in Japan, as the Eternal Supreme Being. Hinayana, the older form of Buddhism, preserved in its Pali Canon shows a heavy reliance upon the adoration of the Buddha, nontheistic and avidly monastic.

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KNOWLEDGE OF INDIA'S PEOPLE

In addition to publishing this magazine, the Department of Organized Research of Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur. M.P; India, acts as an arm of the Postgraduate School. Our curricula include the Master of Arts (Indian Philosophy), the Master of Theology (History of Religions, Hinduism), and the TWO YEAR CURRICULUM IN INDIA CULTURES, leading to our own Postgraduate diploma.

Each curriculum endeavours to relate the student to the contemporary life of the peoples of India, through empirical studies in the field. Approximately twenty hours per week are devoted to field work and the preparation of reports. All such studies occur in the Mid-India Region, and the student is encouraged to select and define his specific inquiry.

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